POINT 3

THE TOC H MAGAZINE

March 1998

TOC H

Bringing people together

POINT 3

Toc H is about people. Founded in 1915, Toc H fights to break down barriers by challenging individuals' preconceptions of others and the divisions which exist in society. While its work is based on Christian principles, all faiths and none are recognised and accepted.

Toc H works with people from all walks of life, tackling social problems such as loneliness, isolation and deprivation through an approach which focuses on self-help and taking responsibility for oneself and the local community.

Toc H uses the model of the compass to emphasise four personal challenges which are the inspiration for its membership. The Four Points of the Toc H Compass are:

1 Friendship: 'To Love Widely'
to 'welcome all in friendship'.
2 Service: 'To Build Bravely'
to 'give personal service'.
3 Fairmindedness: 'To Think Fairly'
to 'listen always to the views of others'.
4 The Kingdom of God: 'To Witness Humbly'
to 'acknowledge the spiritual nature of man'.

Point 3 is the magazine of Toc H, and derives its title from the third Point of the Toc H Compass. It acts as a vehicle for communication between staff and members, informing, encouraging and stimulating readers on topical and relevant issues. Contributions are welcome from any group or individual involved in Toc H.

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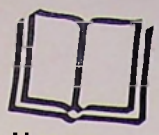
- The opinions expressed are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Editor or Toc H.
- While Point 3 is made available to all members and staff free of charge, a voluntary contribution towards the cost of production and mailing is welcomed.
- Printed on chlorine-free, environmentally friendly paper.

Cover Photo: Spring Tulips - See page 6 for their connection with Toc H

Toc H is an active Movement of people practising reconciliation by being open to all in friendship, offering service in the community, confronting intolerance and prejudice, and discovering a faith to live by. We bring the Toc H experience to as many people as possible to develop personal growth and build caring communities.

Registered Charity No. 211042

A.D.A READING SERVICES



Since June of last year production of Point 3 on tape has been handled by Mrs Artus and A.D.A Reading Services. Mrs Artus originally came into contact with Toc H many years ago through the Farnborough Branch, when as a volunteer she helped servicemen. Here Mrs Artus tells more about the service she runs...

The A.D.A Reading Service was established in 1978 as a registered charity to fill a perceived gap in the reading services provided for visually impaired people by other similar organisations. The Service is run as a small family concern with minimal administrative functions and with the ability to provide a personal touch and a ready response in or out of normal office hours. Operation of the Service, following an initial enquiry, consists of the provision by the client of written or printed material together with cassettes sufficient to cover the work. Specific items, and others requiring a quick turn-round, are usually read in-house (invariably by the Secretary). Otherwise the work is passed on to one of a number of volunteer readers, depending upon their specific interests or availability. On completion of the reading, the material is returned via the Secretary (who holds the postal concession) to the client.

The Service does not have sophisticated equipment or employ such procedures as tone indexing, as the type of clients catered for have normally only basic replay machines and have interests predominantly in recreational topics. More serious subject matter is of course also accepted for reading. Since its inception the Service has, with the help of its faithful readers, been responsible for the transcription of over 2000 documents ranging from knitting patterns to a massive computer programming manual and, over a number of years, a cassette copying and distribution facility for a quarterly Gardening magazine for up to some 300 gardeners with visual impairments. Currently the Civil & Public Services Association makes use of the Service, their magazine RED TAPE being read and distributed monthly by the Secretary. BLESmag, the journal of the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association, and COURAGE, the newsletter of the War Widows Association of Great Britain are routinely read and church magazines and local newsletters are also regular features. Tape recorder, video recorder and micro-wave oven operating instruction books (with inherent problems in describing the positions of the operating controls!) are also requested quite often. The service is free to clients, with minimal operating costs being covered by one regular donation from a very helpful Association together with some small donations from satisfied clients.

If you would like to receive Point 3 on tape please contact Mrs Artus at:

A.D.A Reading Services, 6 Dalewood Rise, Laverstock, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 1SF Tel: 01722 326987

Voluntary contributions towards the cost of materials are always welcomed.

TIMES ARE CHANGING...

The old order changeth and the eye of faith looks on to see what will emerge ...

We live in rapidly changing times. Times when events today that occur on the other side of the world can, and do, touch our lives tomorrow. No one person or organisation is immune, and whether or not we are prepared to change with the times is almost immaterial, for the times will change anyway, testing our resolve and our faith, often to its limits.

We in Toc H are no strangers to the process of change, which has been the dominant feature of the last 5 years, if not more. Yet we know that, if we want our Movement to continue to reach out into the wilderness of human need, then change we must for, as the saying goes, 'Time and tide wait for no man'.

Perhaps you have heard rumours, maybe you have heard more directly from your Central Councillor, either way you will know that once again Toc H is going through a traumatic period of change as we come to grips with a situation that has been years in the making.

Perhaps the saddest thing of all is that many of the changes we have had to make over the past few weeks have been driven by finance rather than being driven by what we believe and what we are. I have sad news to share with you. News that will no doubt shake you as it has me and many others, especially those who have had the awesome task of taking these most difficult decisions. Once again we are having to talk redundancies, which this time round cut deep into the heart of the Movement. It is my sad duty to inform you that in this most recent round of cuts, designed to bring our deficit down to manageable proportions, we have had to lose not only valuable posts but also extremely valuable people. The post of National Chaplain (Alan Johnson) has been made redundant, as have those of the Head of Development (Tim Day); the National Events Co-ordinator (John Biggerstaff); the Communications Officer (Sarah Claridge); the Central Services Support Manager (Barbara Martin); the Print Room Operator (Nikki Mackenzie); and two Personal Assistants (Sue Pells and Janet Graves). There is no way that I can dress up this news and make it any more palatable other than to tell you straight what the situation is. As I say, it is with deep sadness that I share this information with you, but share it I must.

On the more positive side the Central Executive Committee has examined in depth how best we can employ our human resources to ensure that Toc H can still play an important role in building a happier, healthier and fairer society. With this in mind the work of our Divisional development staff teams is to be much more focused than hitherto has been the case. As part of this focus we shall be concentrating on developing a range of activities associated with people who are alone, for whatever reasons that may be. We shall be developing a re-invigorated programme of Toc H Projects and events

continued ...

with special emphasis on recruiting and training leaders and developing follow-up systems that will bring new Members into the Movement. We shall continue to promote Toc H work and activity through our newly devised and highly successful 'Families and People under Pressure' scheme as currently in South Cheshire and East London. We shall also be focusing on developing a range of Chaplaincy based events both for Members and people outside the Movement through our small, but enthusiastic and committed Chaplaincy Team.

Fundraising, and yes I know what some of you think of fundraising, remains a crucial issue for Toc H for, despite the cuts, we still need to find a further £200,000 to bridge the final gap. Our Fundraising Team will now be seeking to establish Toc H charity shops in various selected locations. It is our earnest hope that Toc H Members will demonstrate a willingness to participate in these enterprises by helping directly, recruiting volunteers, supplying goods for sale etc. Our central fundraising too will be gearing itself up to undertake a range of appeals to trusts, companies, indeed anyone that we believe may be interested in supporting our Movement and its work.

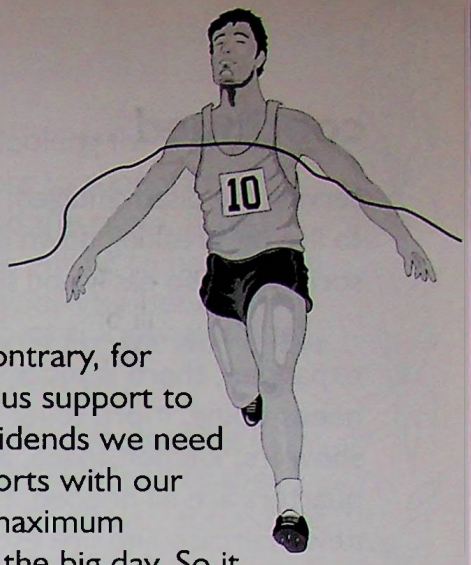
But none of this can happen if you do not help it. We need Members to be active in development, in fundraising, in helping in all sorts of ways to see our Movement through these difficult times and we can do it if we want to, of that I am utterly convinced. Somewhere in the annals of Toc H history is a quote that says something like 'The cash box can be as spiritual as the Chapel'. Great or small we need every Member to do something positive to help our Movement forward never forgetting that though the times may change, and though we may change, the Eternal Realities on which our Movement is founded never change. The Eternal Realities, the Four Points of the Toc H Compass, must be at the heart of all that we do for it is these above all else that give our Movement its distinctiveness. Toc H is not the same as other charities, nor do we ever wish to be. We are different and should be proud of it. It is not a question of pursuing the 'Christian bit', an expression I intensely dislike, every once in a while and because it makes us feel comfortable. Rather, Toc H must be spiritual through and through, from top to bottom, and from side to side.

You will have many questions no doubt that arise from the news that I have shared with you. What is going to happen to Point 3? My answer at this stage is, I don't know. Where will we get our printing done? Again, my answer is, I don't know. If I may so dare, such problems pale into insignificance when we are fighting for the very soul of our Movement and all that Toc H stands for. It is too good to lose, too good to throw away, and fight for it we will - with your help.

The old order changeth and the eye of faith looks on to see what will emerge.

Mike Lyddiard
Director

LINDRIDGE MARATHON MAN



There can be few sights in sport more dramatic for sheer scale of numbers than the London Marathon. The impression, as the race begins, is of a tidal wave of humanity surging unstoppably through the capital's streets; a vast sea of humanity threatening to sweep aside everything in its path. But among the many thousands of competitors lining up on April 26th this year, one, for Members in the South West, will be much more than just a face in the crowd - he will be carrying our hopes and good wishes on his shoulders. His name, Robert Tinnyunt - owner of a local pottery in Kingsteignton and member of the nearby running club 'Teignbridge Trotters'.

The story is remarkable. Ten years ago Robert's very life was in doubt as he entered hospital to undergo a quadruple heart bypass operation. Yet not only did he fully recover - since then, in an astonishing testimony to the skill of the surgeon and his own irrepressible determination, he has regularly run the London Marathon for charity. We were naturally delighted then when last summer Robert volunteered to run this year on behalf of Toc H/Lindridge House. The only obstacle in our way was gaining entrance into the field, and for a time it looked as though this might defeat us, both Robert's personal application and that made on his behalf by Lindridge proving unsuccessful. Yet, just when we'd almost given up hope, news came that Robert's name had been drawn out of the hat as the last of his club's wild-card entries! We were in!

The job, however, is not done. On the contrary, for Robert's generous support to yield proper dividends we need to match his efforts with our own, ensuring maximum sponsorship for the big day. So it is that letters and sponsor forms have gone out to every Branch in Division 2, not asking Members to dig deeper yet again (though of course we won't say no if they do!) but urging them to canvass support among their family, friends, colleagues and contacts. Only if we do that can we hope to equal the £2,000 Robert's exertions have raised in the past and maybe even beat it!

But what, you may ask, is all this for? Where will the money go? The answer, of course, is in everything Lindridge stands for. A Toc H Centre these past twelve years, it is a haven for all kinds of people - children with physical disabilities, families under pressure, disadvantaged children from overseas, adults with learning disabilities or mental health problems, inner-city youngsters, people with hearing or sight difficulties, groups made up of those caring for relatives at home, and so I could go on. Combine all these with the way Lindridge is increasingly being used as a venue for seminars, meetings, quiet days, retreats, and fun events by local churches, schools and colleges, and you will see how effectively it is fulfilling the aims of Toc H - bringing people together, helping them to discover their own worth and the worth of those around them,

continued ...

serving the disadvantaged, offering a faith to live by, breaking down the barriers in society that so easily and so often divide us.

Yet if this work is to continue and be expanded, there is much that urgently needs doing. More toilet facilities, showers, kitchen space, and sleeping quarters are all needed, together with a new staircase and fire escape - not to mention a host of smaller repairs and improvements waiting in the wings. Much money has already been raised, not least through the tireless efforts over this past year of Councillor Brian Rittershausen, Chairman of Kingsteignton Parish Council and vigorous supporter of Lindridge. But far more is needed, a recent estimate suggesting that simply to convert the barn and upgrade the House will cost upwards of £25,000.

The challenge is enormous, but so also is the opportunity. Remember us over these coming months as we do our best to grasp it.

Nick Fawcett
Chaplain/Development Officer, Division 2

If you would like to make a donation in support of Robert's bid, or feel able to make use of a sponsor form, please contact Nick on 01823 663399 as soon as possible.

TOC H IN THE TULIPS

Over the years Toc H has been linked with many things - but tulips! No I jest not. In 1998 Toc H will be reviving its links with Tulip time in South Holland, in this the 40th Anniversary year of the Spalding flower parade. The annual flower parade in Spalding, a small Lincolnshire market town, began in a small way but soon developed into a floral extravaganza with large decorated floats painstakingly constructed by placing thousands of tulip heads (the waste from the local bulb industry) onto metal frames. Each head is placed individually to match up to the design plan by teams of volunteers working round the clock for several days before the parade. The fortunes of the parade declined in the late 1980s, but luckily greater co-operation between the local council, Springfields gardens and local industry has seen a revival of interest in what has rightly been described as "one of the greatest free shows in Europe". Some 200,000 people are expected to visit Spalding between 2nd - 4th May, and many of those will line the four-mile parade route on the Saturday, others will perhaps have a better view of the floats (minus their

human occupants) when they are on view at the Springfields gardens on the Sunday and Monday.

Toc H was involved in the early years of the parade. Members of the West Pinchbeck Branch were, and some still are, involved in the flower trade, and Projects were held at Tulip time with volunteers spending many happy and cold hours in barns constructing floral garlands, again painstakingly made from tulip heads. Toc H even entered a small float in some early parades. We would be very interested to hear from anyone who was a volunteer in any of these projects. Have you any memories or photographs that you could share with us? (see also the back page).

In 1998 Parade Day will be a showcase for Toc H and its work. We are also using it as a chance to promote the Poachers Den at West Pinchbeck which, thanks to several recent Projects, is enjoying a well deserved freshen-up. Thanks to the support of one of our Branch members, Councillor Maurice Chappell, we have secured a pitch along the parade route just outside the town centre on the Pinchbeck Road. Here we hope a small army of volunteers will promote Toc H and its work today with displays, leaflets, Events Brochures, stickers, and perhaps Toc H paper flowers. There are several ways in which you as a Branch or individual Member can help:

1) Come to Spalding on the day. We are looking for a roster of volunteers to support the event and the stand. If you would be willing to help for an hour of your visit between 11am and 4pm, we would love to hear from you.

2) We are currently looking into the design of a Toc H paper-flower buttonhole - something that can be easily and inexpensively made. We anticipate that a large number of these would fit into a shoebox and that such a shoebox would cost little to post. If you would like to help us by making flowers and filling a shoebox or two, please register your interest by contacting me at the address below.

3) If you would like to volunteer for the event associated with this special day, look in the events booklet and apply now!

I hope that July's Point 3 will contain an article on what promises to be one of the most colourful Toc H events of the year.

Louisa Evans

Louisa can be contacted at the following address:

3 Penway Drive
Pinchbeck
Spalding
Lincolnshire
PE11 3PJ
Tel: 01775 714533 (please do not phone between 6pm and 8.30pm)

GARDEN PROJECT A FINE EXAMPLE

Step One - Tom measures out the site.

In the October issue of Point 3 we reported how Sheila Forsyth of Coupar Angus Branch had just completed a Project to build a raised garden for the local community hospital. In Sheila's own account of the initiative below, we gain an insight into the hard work and tenacity involved. An example to us all, she shows just what Toc H Members are capable of...

Way back in 1995 I saw an advert in our local paper appealing for help with constructing a raised garden in our local community day hospital. I sent the cutting to Tom Elliott as I knew he and Barry Englefield wanted a Project in Scotland. Shortly after, we met with hospital staff and agreed to build a raised garden for wheelchair and zimmer-frame users. And so began an adventure and challenge...

Phase One began in April '96 and our first challenge was to find volunteers to do the work. We got no response from the Project book, but volunteers Kathryn McNab and Ian Scott from Paisley agreed to help Tom. We cleared the area marked for the garden and footpath and levelled it. We dug foundations and concrete was put in.

Phase Two was preceded by a delay, due to changes in the hospital personnel. However, in the meantime preparations had been made for bricks and slabs etc. We negotiated with Perth and Kinross Health Care for funds for materials and £2,000 was agreed on. I agreed to provide accommodation but volunteers were again in short supply. Roger Giles agreed to come and help, Kathryn McNab offered a weekend and one or two others were 'maybes'. I had also put an advert in the local paper appealing for a bricklayer - no joy. Disillusion was setting in, then on the bus one morning a friendly driver said, "What's wrong, hen? You look fed up." So he got my tale of woe. "No problem," said he, "I am a bricklayer and will have that week off and help you." Jackie Leyton was his name and he kept his word. I also phoned the local Community Service and spoke to Manager Ken Johnstone, who agreed to visit there and then. On inspection he agreed, straightaway, to provide a team of lads on community service along with a supervisor.

Step Two - Patients survey the completed flower bed.

Although I had been on Projects before and had done a Leaders weekend course, I had no idea how much this initiative would take over my life. Perhaps if I had, I would have run a mile! In my ignorance I believed we would finish in eight days (in fact it took eight weeks). I learnt hard lessons on the way... at first I did not allow for volunteers not being able to cope, or for my brickie, Jackie, not turning up until midday or for red tape, rain, snow, thunder and lightning. In total, we lost nearly four days from our original schedule.

Tom had to do the bricklaying in Jackie's absence (will his back ever be the same again?) while Roger, Kathryn and I laboured. The community service gang with their supervisor, John Sparks, concentrated on the footpath. Poor Roger took ill on the Sunday and went home. Kathryn followed on the Monday. Time for some reinforcements. I asked my brother if he would help - he gave us a day. My pal David Lewis, a brickie, came out one night. Tom had to go home of the Wednesday and we were not nearly finished. "Help!" I thought, "What do I do now?" I phoned a retired bricklayer, Bob Williams, and asked him for help and he agreed, adding, "Why didn't you ask me sooner?" So, after more rain, he arrived with his mates, Jim Auchterlorsie and Jim McIlroy, and in no time at all the bricks were up - magic! I did my share of wheelbarrowing and each load I pushed I cursed Tom and Barry for getting me into this (was that why Barry went to Wales?) One day John, our supervisor, gave me what I thought was an easy job, sitting down and filling in between the slabs with cement. But by next morning I was in agony!

Step Three - Sheila & John with just one of the flowers needing potting.

I decided to have a day in the office and spent it phoning around all the garden centres and local shops for donations of goods in kind. We got eight bags of compost, two lorry loads of topsoil, and hundreds of bedding plants, shrubs, heathers and all the materials for building a wooden fence, gates and wire mesh to put into trenches, (all to hopefully keep the rabbits out). We had also previously been donated £200.

Now the Project is complete - the staff have had the patients out, the plants are planted and the shrubs put in the surrounding areas - and I can look back over our achievements. Toc H has certainly brought people of all sorts together, on this very worthwhile community Project. We have had lots of fun and friendly banter. We have also had much publicity from the press and Radio Tay.

Credit: John Glen Photography

Step Four - The opening ceremony - a job well done!

I will miss the fellowship from the lads. I have spent two weeks holiday and all my days off with them - a total of 220 hours. One of the lads doing service, Pat, did all his eighty hours with us. To say farewell, the patients baked him a cake and we all signed a good-luck card. But he missed us all and he came back as a volunteer.

I have so many people to be grateful to - firstly all the Toc H volunteers; people who donated and showed an interest and encouraged us all, and my family and friends. Then the staff for their friendliness and patience, and Ken, John and the lads who were the stars. And lastly Tom, for starting it and for his help and encouragement all the way through.

Sheila Forsyth
Coupar Angus

ANSWERING A CALL

Looking back on my life, I suppose four men have had a marked influence on it. One man was the CO of the last unit I served with in the Army. Another man was one of my seniors in the Civil Service. The third man has to be my father who, among other things, was instrumental in my joining Toc H at an early age in 1939. The fourth man, a Toc H Padre, Rev. Edgar Wallace, was a Welshman who had a passion for rugby and music. It is his influence and the way he got me involved in voluntary work that I would like to write about.

Edgar had an immeasurable love of people, particularly those who had been dealt a rough hand of cards. In our Toc H lives I had met Edgar several times at Guest Nights, Training Days and Central Council Meetings and he made a great impression on me. Then, eighteen months after I had retired from the Civil Service in 1980 and was doing a part time job, Edgar invited my wife and I to join in a new venture he was planning. He had, among other things, for several years worked to help the homeless with the aid of the Toc H Branches in Sussex, a host of friends, and his own dynamic personality linked to his faith. He now wanted to set up residential homes and a day centre for people with physical disabilities, learning difficulties or multiple disabilities.

After a couple of visits listening to his visions of the future, we were converted and came to join him in his work. It would be possible to write a book about everything that has happened in the 15 years since we joined him. Despite all the ups and downs, the problems and the heartaches, the successes and the gains have far outweighed the difficulties. Behind it all stood Edgar. Never once did his faith in his work falter. He taught us the value of prayer, how to think of others and share the joy of successes, however small, when they came along. Thursday evenings were very special when we met in the little chapel for an hour or so to talk and pray. The emphasis was on giving and those words from the prayer of St. Ignatius Loyola which was invariably used, came to the fore, "To give and not to count the cost."

The scheme now has five residential homes in the community for over 40 residents and a day centre second to none which has over 100 additional people coming in daily. The number of friendships formed are countless. Unfortunately a year ago dear Edgar died but, such are the foundations he laid, the future is secure. Sometimes we ask, "Why did we do it?" We don't know. When I asked Edgar why he picked us, all he would say was, "I was told to cast my bread upon the water." It's fifteen years since we answered that call and we wouldn't have missed it for the world.

Curly

If you are quietly serving your community - or know someone who is - why not write about it for this series? By informing other Members of the width and variety of Toc H's work, you may inspire others to pursue similar initiatives.

WELCOME TO DAISY

Last April Point 3 carried an update on Khasdobir Youth Action Group and now, almost a year on, there is further good news to report...

The Khasdobir Youth Action Group has, at last, been able to appoint a new full-time co-ordinator. She is Ms Mahbuba Sultana, known to her friends as Daisy. Aged 26, Daisy comes from a well-known family in Sylhet. While at university she did a considerable amount of voluntary work, especially helping at eye camps in rural villages. She started work with KYAG on 24th November.

Daisy (left) in the KYAG office, with Reba the assistant co-ordinator. Photo: Kathleen Jackson

Peter East, who helped to found the project back in 1984, was once again in Khasdobir in December, accompanied by Kathleen Jackson, who raises much money for KYAG through regular fund raising meals in Asian restaurants in Loughborough. They were able to spend a good deal of time with Daisy during her first three weeks and they have both returned full of praise for her. 'She's bright - I wouldn't like to try to put one over on her', was how Peter put it. She knows her own mind and had sufficient confidence to express it at her very first meeting of the KYAG committee. Having got to know Daisy, Peter has returned with renewed confidence in the future of the project.

One of her first tasks will be to try to get control of the budget, in particular the spending on welfare which is always extraordinarily difficult. If someone comes to the office, and you know they haven't eaten for two days, how can you not give them enough to buy a handful of rice? And, if we're honest, it's the stories of destitution that tug at our heartstrings and keep us giving. Stories of people like the 36 widows who received just £5 a month from KYAG, a pittance, but a pittance that saves them from absolute starvation. Or people like Peter's friend Happy, whose father died when she was a teenager, leaving her to feed herself and her mother by making and selling clothes. She married a rickshaw driver who was, she says, 'a good man. We had two meals a day.' Now he has died and she is once again the breadwinner for herself and her children and her now very elderly mother.

Children in one of the Schools Under The Sky.

But somehow the expenditure has to be kept within limits. We just don't have the resources to solve all the problems of poverty in Bangladesh, or even in Khasdobir. What we can do is to help some people to get the education and skills that will enable them to earn their own living, no longer to be dependent on handouts from foreigners.

One day while Peter was there in December there was a knock on the door of his hotel room and a young man came in. 'I was one of your students at a School Under The Sky,' he said. He had gone on to high school, with help from KYAG, and now he had a good job. He had heard Peter was there and just wanted to come in and say thank-you. Just one example of someone who has been helped to break free from the poverty of his birth.

Theoretically, primary education in Bangladesh is free and for everyone. But the government simply can not afford it. The entry age for primary school has been raised and the number of places available reduced. The state primary school in Khasdobir, which once had 1,300 children, can now only take 800. So the need for the Schools Under The Sky grows ever greater. The work, which we have the privilege of being able to help, really does make an enormous difference to some of the poorest people in one of the poorest countries in the world. And under Daisy's leadership we can be sure that the work of KYAG will grow in new, and as yet undreamed of, ways.

Ken Prideaux-Brune

Saturday June 13th is Khasdobir Friendship Day. If you would like more information or would like to get involved in this annual event to raise funds for the project, please contact Central Services in Wendover.

TOC H 1997 CHRISTMAS PARTY at SKELMORLIE

Members, armed with teapots and trays, - ready to do battle.

December 6th saw the 33rd Toc H Christmas Party for Senior Citizens from the villages of Wemyss Bay and Skelmorlie. As usual the whole day turned out to be a success. Our local Branch was overwhelmed with assistance from young and old, which just goes to prove that if Toc H is seen to be doing something worthwhile in the community, then people from all walks of life are only too willing to help. All we had to do was ask and the help was willingly given. I am convinced that one of the secrets in reducing the decline of Toc H membership is to have more Projects, or Events, which are visible to the wider community. Where real help is required, real help will be given.

This year 350 Senior Citizens were invited. This is a calculated figure since our venue can only accommodate 150 to a sit-down meal. The first part of our Christmas Party was to see to it that our guests were well-fed. Fortunately all arrived early and for the first time in 33 years we had no spare seats.

After the food, Toc H produced a variety show to entertain our guests. This year, we, for the first time, were complimented for the professional nature of the show - God knows what they must have thought about earlier productions! The entertainment consisted of a mini cub-scout gang-show. (The cubs provide this willingly as a thank-you to the local Branch for entirely funding the cub-scout swimming programme). The rest of the show consisted mainly of vocal entertainers, all local - and we can also claim that some five of our guest singers have appeared recently on BBC Scotland Television; not bad for a small village! Anyway, the highlight of the show was the performance given by our own Toc H cowboys who sang "Crystal Chandelier and Blanket on the Ground" - the audience still thought the show was professional!

One of the results of our day was very humbling - we asked a worker from the Salvation Army to come and collect the mountain of leftover food. He said, "This will mean a lot to the homeless in the nearby towns of Greenock and Port Glasgow" – which made all our hard efforts somehow worthwhile.

Bill Cowie
Chairman - Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Branch

TOC H MAN WINS TOP VOLUNTEERING AWARD

Robert Glenfield has been awarded the annual Whitbread Volunteer Action Award for Northern Ireland at a national ceremony in London. Bob received his prestigious award from HRH Princess Michael of Kent and Home Office Minister, Mr Alun Michael.

The Whitbread Volunteer Action Awards, run in partnership with the Home Office, are the pre-eminent national awards celebrating voluntary contributions. The scheme, now in its 16th year, has led the field in acknowledging the importance of volunteering in the community by recognising some of the country's most committed volunteers.

Robert Glenfield has worked as a volunteer for a number of organisations in Northern Ireland, Central Africa and England over the past 47 years. On receiving his prize money, Bob nominated Toc H as the voluntary organisation with which he works most closely, thus entitling Toc H to a donation of £500.

• In the September Point 3, certain claims are made on behalf of Cheltenham Branch. We of Exeter Branch send our congratulations to Cheltenham. Exeter Branch like Cheltenham also has a history going back to 1920, according to our archives, when Tubby travelled to our city and contacted men who were on the Communicants roll of the Upper Room at Poperinge, at the same time as Pat Leonard was getting people together in Cheltenham. We too claim this December as our 75th anniversary as our lamp was first lit along with Cheltenham's at the Guildhall London by The Prince of Wales (later the Duke of Windsor) on 15th December 1922. There were 20 lamps lit that night. We would be interested to hear of any others still in regular use in their Branches. There were 28 men in the Branch in 1922, today there are nine of us - one the son of one of the 1922 originals.
We are not able to compete with Cheltenham regarding ages of Members, as we seem to have a lower age grouping. One under 40, three in their 50s, two in their 60s, a 70 plus-year- old and two octogenarians. Two of our Members celebrate another anniversary this year, that of joining Toc H fifty years ago in 1947. One, who was in the Territorial Army at the outbreak of war, had recently returned from service for the Devonshire Regiment in the war in Burma, the other was just 18 years of age and very soon after went off to National Service in the RAF.

Mr D Giles
Exeter

• *A new member of Sheaf (Sheffield) Branch, Miss Helga Hatt, who was initiated by Roger Giles, outlines here, her previous links with Toc H...*
I was five when my father's work took our family to live in Belgium. Our home was in the industrial centre of the country, near the town of Charleroi. After the initial problems of language, customs, etc were overcome, we settled down to life in a foreign country. There was a surprisingly large, though scattered, English-speaking community in the area, with an active Toc H Branch in Charleroi, which organised social activities, monthly Church Services, etc. I grew up knowing something about Toc H.
All this changed when Belgium was invaded on the 10th May 1940. We endeavoured to get back to England. Starting off by train, we reached the French border and from there joined the trail of refugees walking the roads of France. But when it became obvious we were not going to reach the Channel ports, we turned back for home. My dad, brother and an uncle were arrested as British civilians and sent to Germany. My mother, sister and I spent the war in occupied Belgium.
After the liberation of our part of Belgium in the Autumn of 1944, I walked into the Toc H/CVWW Services' Club in Brussels to ask whether there was any chance of a job. I was lucky and spent four happy, fulfilling years working with Toc H, first in Brussels and then in Germany. I shall always be grateful for the kindness and fellowship I enjoyed. I returned to England at the end of 1948, took a YMCA Training Course and worked with the "Y" in various towns in England and Scotland until I retired.
I now look forward to renewing my links with Toc H and membership of the Sheaf (Sheffield) Branch.

Helga Hatt

• I was interested to read in the October issue of Point 3 the account of the formation of the Penlwys Estate Scout Group. My only connection with Toc H is that in the 1930s I was a member of the 25th Portsmouth Toc H Rover Scout Crew. The leaders were Toc H Members who had served in the 1914-18 war. The crew eventually ceased to exist but although our numbers decrease year by year, we still meet for a re-union once a year.
I was therefore pleased to find that Toc H was still sponsoring a new scout group. I hope that they too will form friendships which will still be alive in 60-70 years time.

Tony Austin
Cheltenham

TOC H IN THE CUFFLEY COMMUNITY

Every Autumn children at Cuffley School bring Harvest Festival presents to the school, which then, via Toc H (in the person of John Burgess) are distributed to lonely, elderly and disabled people in Tower Hamlets. The schoolchildren also bring in presents at Christmas, and these are then distributed to needy children in Tower Hamlets. This year a number also went to recently arrived refugee children from Montserrat.

a bootful of goodies being loaded up by Cuffley schoolchildren

CHANGES TO TOC H MEMBERSHIP

fresh faces and fond farewells

Every Member makes an invaluable, individual contribution to Toc H. In a regular feature, Point 3 acknowledges both those who are new to membership and those who sadly have passed on. In welcoming new Members, we hope to give you a flavour of the person behind the name by listing the 'hidden talents' individuals have told us about on their application forms. The Tributes and Farewells provide a limited opportunity to recognise the individual contributions made by those whose membership has sadly come to a close.

WELCOMES

- **Joyce Heap**, member of Crewkerne Branch
- **Nicholas Davis**, member of EC & Tower Hill Branch. Nicholas is an ordinand in a London Parish and hopes to be ordained in June 2006. One of his main interests is music.
- **John Parker**, member of High Brooms Branch.
- **Ruby Brooks**, member of Kings Norton & Northfield Branch. Ruby enjoys gardening and has nursing experience.
- **Donna McMahon**, member of Scans Group.
- **Joyce Bonnett**, member of Spalding Branch.
- **Hilda Marshall**, member of Spalding Branch.
- **Beatrice Phillip**, member of Spalding Branch.
- **Gwynne Atkinson**, member of Winsford Branch. Gwynne is an advanced first-aider, assistant scout leader and canoeing coach.
- **Harry Barnes**, member of Winsford Branch.
- **Tammy Boyle**, member of Winsford Branch. Tammy enjoys cooking and arranging food.
- **Samantha Dineley**, member of Winsford Branch. Samantha plays the guitar and sings. She also teaches Chinese children Maths and English and is a childminder for a disabled child.
- **Joan Pendelbury**, member of Winsford Branch.
- **Julieanne Ward**, member of Winsford Branch. Julieanne enjoys the arts and is NNEB qualified.
- **Michelle Smith**, member of North West-North Wales Projects Group.

TRIBUTES

- **Harry Stevenson** member of Walsall Branch. He was very active in Branch Life since joining in 1946 right up until the date of his death, making a major contribution towards our optimism for the future. He was also keenly interested in the Cannock Chase Project, and a very regular member of our Branch's monthly working parties. A fund, established in memory of Harry and Vi (who died within 3 days of Harry) to further the work of Cannock Chase has already reached the sum of £860 and is testimony to the high regard in which they were both held. Above all else, Harry was a great humanitarian with a real gift for enhancing the lives of others, and providing help and assistance with a quiet and often self-effacing approach. The most appropriate memorials that the Branch are committed to making to Harry's memory are firstly, our continuing resolve to build for the future, and secondly, to re double our efforts to complete and maintain the work of the Cannock Chase Project. Harry will be most sadly missed by the very many people with whom he came into contact. **MB**
- **Rev. John Lovegrove** member of Wellingborough Men's Branch, who was a very keen Member and Padre to our Branch. He was also the Northants District Padre for several years before he moved to another area. John was the first British Padre to set foot on French soil on 'D-Day' and took an active part in the televised programme on the 50th Anniversary. He was always there for personal as well as Branch advice. He was a friend to us all and will be truly missed. **BE**
- **Bill Stanton** member of Newton Abbot Branch and its longest serving member. In 1938, at age 16, he joined Torquay Branch, where he was Treasurer for several years. He transferred to Newton Abbot in 1955 and for many years was our Chairman. At other times he was Secretary and Job Master. He was a founder-member of the team, which for several years provided transport to take blind people to meetings and was a regular on our jigsaw library rota. He was a very good photographer and a great sportsman, particularly at table tennis, cricket and golf. **NAP**
- **Dorothy Smith** member of Toc H in Montreal who for many years gave hospitality to visiting members whenever necessary. Dorothy was in all aspects a real Toc H person - a description known and appreciated by so many of the older members of the Movement. She will most certainly be greatly missed by her family and multitude of friends. **ET**
- **Ron Gatiss** member of Falmouth Branch. Ron had held many offices and joined Toc H in his native North East. The District Chairman, Tim Richards, said: "Our Toc H prayer contains the phrase 'to leap with joy to any task for others. Ron really lived out the meaning of those words. He was a true friend and will be greatly missed by us and by many others for whom he 'did good by stealth'." As a memorial to Ron, his friend, Douglas Potts in Australia, has decided to join Adelaide Toc H rather than send a floral tribute. **TR**
- **Nellie Davies** member of the Newcastle (Staffordshire) Branch, where she was Treasurer. We have lost a much-loved and valued Member who led a very full and useful life. As well as Toc H commitments she was a founder member of the North Staffs History of Nursing Group. She is greatly missed. **FH**
- **Cecil Baylis** of Cheltenham Branch. Cecil's connection with Toc H goes back to the 1930s, although during the last couple of years failing health prevented him from attending our weekly meetings. He was a born "do-gooder" and his commitment to the Christian way of life was paramount in all he did, even to the extent of accepting a spell of imprisonment during 1939-45 war rather than sacrifice his convictions as a conscientious objector. He was an avid letter writer on any subject which offended his commitment to his love of God and for his neighbour. As well as Toc H, he was also an active member of UNA, NVALA, and other similar organisations seeking justice and respect, especially for young people. This was shown only too well in his work with children's camps and holidays in the 1930's. Cecil was a pillar of society and correctness, a reliable and conscientious Branch member, but, most all, always a gentleman. He will be greatly missed, not only by his family but also by all his friends in Cheltenham Branch. **EGV**
- **F.J.N (Jack) Read** member of Solihull Branch. Jack joined Halifax Branch on 6th December 1932 and stayed with them until he moved to Solihull in January 1961. He was Pilot in Solihull for many years and served in most other Branch Offices either in Solihull or Halifax, conscientiously and with thoughtfulness and good humour, during a lifetime's Service to the Movement. Solihull Branch has lost an irreplaceable member.
- **Reg White** of Sandown/Shanklin Joint Branch. Missed by his friends. Our condolences to Florrie, his wife. **WP**
- **Elsie Gentle** member of Hatfield Ladies Branch. She was a very generous person who would visit Members and friends in hospital to help them in any way she could. She was a keen District Team Member although the Branch had come to an end. She firmly believed in Toc H always and she will be greatly missed by all who knew her. **KK**
- **Nora Ellis.** For over fifty years Nora was a most loyal and dedicated Member, originally with the Lowestoft Womens Branch, then in later years with Gorleston Joint Branch and the Broadland District. Always interested in helping others, she became an active worker with the Children's Society, where her cheerful disposition made her extremely popular with all who came into contact with her. Many people are going to miss her. **CAB**

FAREWELLS

- **Alice Partridge,** member of Peterborough & Stamford Branch.
- **Alma Bond**, member of Norwich Branch.
- **Isabella Farrow**, member of Hitchin Branch.
- **Eustace Fendick**, member of South Yorks Branch.
- **Millie Hoult**, member of Graeme Branch.
- **Anita James**, member of Glamorgan District.
- **Robert Page**, member of Darlington Branch.
- **Frederick Read**, member of Solihull Branch.
- **Olive Turner**, member of Bebington & Bromborough Branch.
- **T 'Glyn" Williams**, member of Bebington & Bromborough Branch.

• ALISON HOUSE SPRING & SUMMER PROGRAMME 1998

• 'SPRING' PAINTING WEEK
25th April - 1st May
Tutor: Harry Muscott
£185.00 per person (inc tuition and VAT)
An ideal short break for the experienced artist or beginner. New approaches and techniques can be practised in a relaxed atmosphere with expert advice and tuition.

• PASTELS & ACRYLICS
10th - 15th May
Tutor: Mr David Newbould
£190.00 per person (inc tuition and VAT)
David's fresh and exciting approach to painting will give new inspiration to the experienced artist whilst the beginner will gain confidence and understanding. David will show new ways of mixing soft pastels with inks and the use of acrylics in landscape, portrait and still-life painting - with the emphasis on practical work.

• ALISON HOUSE GARDEN COMPANIONS
18th - 22nd May and 5th - 9th October
Price: £35.00 per person
During the Spring of 1998 we hope to see the completion of the Cottage Garden and the planting of existing borders, while in the Autumn we plan to focus on our wild garden/conservation area. This is a wonderful way to make new friends and regain that sense of satisfaction of a job well done. PS you don't need to be a gardener.

• BREW HOLIDAY WEEK
27th June - 4th July
With Vera Brew as your Hostess
Price: £175.00 per person/inc half board and VAT)
More than a holiday - an experience of care and fellowship in the warm and friendly atmosphere of Alison House. Enjoy good food and company with time to discover the many interesting facts and places that make this historic part of Derbyshire unique.

• JACK 'N' PAT'S WEEK
5th - 10th July
Price: to be announced
Although an established annual event, this is the first time we have included it in our published programme. Jack and Pat Turner are well known in Toc H circles for their hard work and hospitality, and this is sure to be a holiday to remember. They will organise outings during the week and homespun entertainment in the evenings. A relaxing time of friendship will be had by all.

• ALISON HOUSE - ART AND GARDEN DAY
19th July
Entrance fee: £2.00 (inc Refreshments.)
Over the last 30 years Alison House has given pleasure to many people. Many have found the gardens a source of peace, offering rest from the humdrum of everyday life. Artists have found the gardens and surrounding countryside to contain a wealth of subject matter and inspiration. To celebrate this, Alison House and gardens is holding an open day and for those who enjoy art there will be an exhibition of works by several artists and demonstrations in pastel by David Newbould.

• MARJORIE BERRY - ALISON HOUSE WEEK
8th - 15th August
Price: £190.00 per person (inc VAT)
Make friends whilst enjoying a truly traditional week including walks, visits to local events etc. Plenty of time also for individual pursuits and relaxation. Each evening there is an activity to interest, amuse or maybe even educate you. An opportunity to visit a country house or garden is usually aranged, as is a trip to the theatre.

• PORTRAITS WEEK-END
6th - 8th November
Tutor: David Newbould
Price: £80.00 per person (inc of tuition and VAT)
David's first love is portraiture and his skill and creativity in making portraits live will be demonstrated this week-end. His technique when creating black and white silhouettes will offer a new challenge and interest to both the beginner and experienced artist.

Further details of these and other events at Alison House may be obtained by sending a S.A.E. to: Bill and Dorothy Pepper, Alison House Training & Conference Centre, Intake Lane, Cromford, Derbyshire DE4 3RH

NOTICES

• LEASED PREMISES

The Finance & Properties Department want to avoid the recurrence of a recent problem with a lease and seek your help. The incident occurred when premises leased by Toc H Branch were completely destroyed by fire. The terms of the lease required Toc H to fully insure the property and to keep it in good order, but because of practical difficulties, this had not been done and we were left vulnerable to a major financial loss. Fortunately, in this case, the matter has been satisfactorily resolved with no great harm done. The situation arose because the original lease, signed in good faith, had been lost sight of due to the passage of time and changes in personnel. Does your Branch or District have a lease on any property that we may not be aware of? Please notify the Finance & Properties Dept at Central Services of any lease your Branch holds to enable us to update our records.

• THE TOC H & ALL HALLOWS TRUST

The Toc H & All Hallows Trust is a Trust which has been in existence now for many years. Its purpose is to give book grants to candidates of any denomination who are preparing for ordained ministry. The only condition is that the candidates must have an association with either Toc H or All Hallows Church. The Trust is anxious to help as many people as possible, so if you know of candidates who fulfil the criteria, please encourage them to make enquiries to either Sue Pells at Central Services, or Maureen Kellett at All Hallows Parish House, 43 Trinity Square, London EC3N 4DJ.

In this month's issue (page 6) Louisa Evans sends us news of an initiative to revive Toc H's participation in the annual flower parade in Spalding, Lincolnshire. For my monthly dip into the archives I've managed to dig out several photos of Toc H floats both in previous Spalding festivals and in other carnivals around the country. Toc H can certainly build a pretty impressive float or two...(SC).

Parades in Spalding....

credit: Lincolnshire Free Press

1972 - Toc H float spreads the word

1972 - South Lincs District ride again!

Lighting the way - 1968 and South Lincs. Joint District Team Float. 20,000 tulip heads were fixed to the lamp and it took ten people two evenings to complete.

and around the Country...

credit: Croydon Times.

Ahoy, me hearties! 1956 Pirate ship float constructed by Carshalton Branch for their local carnival -

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe'....The archives have a gap in their records...do any readers recognise the time, the place or the people?

credit: The Croydon Advertiser.

If you have got the hump, join Toc H'. 1965 fibre glass float by New Addington Toc H.